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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2007

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REEDLEY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

FRESNO - United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that KENNETH HENRY McDONALD, 53, Reedley, California pleaded guilty before the Honorable Anthony W. Ishii to one count of possessing visual depictions of the sexual exploitation of minors.

The case is the result of an investigation by the Reedley Police Department as part of Project Safe Childhood. Project Safe Childhood was launched to increase federal prosecutions of sexual predators of children, and to reduce the number of Internet crimes against children including child pornography trafficking. As a part of PSC, the United States Attorney's Office has teamed with state and local agencies and organizations to increase law enforcement presence on the Internet, and to educate the public about safe Internet use, thereby reducing the risk that children might fall prey to online sexual predators. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to www.projectsafchildhood.gov or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who is prosecuting the case, McDONALD admitted in a plea agreement that on January 30, 2007, he possessed several VHS videotapes and Polaroid pictures that depicted the sexual exploitation of minors and that these items had been transported through interstate commerce. According to court documents, the case began on that date when McDONALD contacted the Reedley California Police Department to complain about not receiving several videotapes of naked boys taking showers that he had ordered from a company in the Los Angeles area. According to McDONALD, the company had been shut down by the federal government, and he believed that he had become a victim of identity theft. When investigators interviewed McDONALD at his residence, they found several items that constituted child pornography.

McDONALD was remanded into federal custody after his change of plea, and he will be sentenced on October 1, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. He faces a maximum prison term of ten years, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a possible lifetime term of supervised release. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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